

The Blodwen Lloyd Binns Bequest: its contribution to the development of Glasgow Natural History Society

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ABSTRACT

Professor Blodwen Lloyd Binns (BLB) left a substantial legacy to Glasgow Natural History Society on her death in 1991. In her will, the bequest was 'unconditional', but she made a number of suggestions on how the money could be used both in her will and in additional correspondence. In this paper, we describe how the Society has used the income generated by this generous bequest in the 20 years since BLB's death. The paper covers the management of the bequest, the income generated and expenditure on the Society's activities (nearly £214,000). The bequest has supported the Society's journal *The Glasgow Naturalist* and other publications, biological recording, overseas expeditions, a lecture series, a multitude of research projects and the Society's social activities (one of BLB's specific suggestions). It is no exaggeration to say that the bequest has had a transformative effect on the Society and that, with prudent management, this effect should continue into the future.

INTRODUCTION

Blodwen Lloyd Binns (BLB) died in her 90th year in August 1991, having been a member of Glasgow Natural History Society (initially in its earlier name of the Andersonian Naturalists of Glasgow: see Sutcliffe, 2001) since 1934. In her will, BLB left the Society a substantial legacy. Twenty years after her death seems an appropriate time to appraise the impact that her legacy has made on the Society's affairs.

As Macpherson (1992) recounted, BLB was a member of the Botany Department of Glasgow's Royal Technical College (later the University of Strathclyde) from 1926-62, then Professor of Botany at the new University of Malawi 1965-72. Her scientific work was wide-ranging, including fermentation and marine microbiology. To aid her botanical teaching, she produced a *Handbook of Botanical Diagrams* in 1935, with a second edition in 1949, reprinted seven times. It was the royalties on this book that made a substantial contribution to the legacy she was able to leave to the Society.

BLB's will was made in 1974 and states "this bequest... is unconditional but I express the hope that

it may enable the Andersonian Naturalists a) to arrange for refreshments and thus encourage fraternising at their meetings b) to foster interest in their own undervalued history and achievements including their current activities in conjunction with and for the Botanical Society of the British Isles and the Vegetation Atlas" (quoted from BLB's will in the Society's archives).

Although BLB had stated that the bequest was "unconditional", she had also conveyed to the Society, in a series of eight communications to Peter Macpherson, a number of suggestions as to how the money might be used: these are listed in Table 1 (abstracted from a document in the Society's archives).

1. To complete her biography of Professor Scouler
2. To research a biography of Scott Elliot
3. To research a biography of Roger Henney
4. To produce a brochure of the early history of the Society
5. A publication on the Lost Flora of Glasgow
6. A publication on the Aliens and Adventives in Glasgow
7. A publication on the Lost Flora of Helensburgh
8. In collaboration with Strathclyde University, complete the following Herbarium Transcripts:
 - a) Volume 1 Indigenous flowering plants
 - b) Volume 2 Exotica
 - c) Volume 3 Cryptograms
9. Consider helping Strathclyde University to catalogue the Herbarium
10. Improve the social aspect of the Society
11. Provide a home for the Society

Table 1. Blodwen Lloyd Binns's suggestions

After initially depositing the legacy in the Society's general fund, Council agreed to set up a sub-committee to administer the bequest. This first met on 4th March 1993 and comprised Prof Norman Grist (President), Jean Millar (General Secretary), Bob Gray (Treasurer), Dr Peter Macpherson (Scientific Adviser) and Bruce Lindsay (Financial Adviser). At that meeting, Norman Grist listed several categories for possible expenditure of the legacy and Peter Macpherson read the list of

“suggestions” from BLB’s communications to him. Bruce Lindsay recommended appointment of a broker to advise on investments: the intention would be to maintain the capital, allowing for inflation, and spend the income generated: on the sum initially available - about £175,000 (a huge sum for a small organisation like GNHS), income expected could be around £10,500 per annum. At this first meeting, there were three applications for funding. It was agreed to investigate each further, and to produce a form for the use of all future applicants (summarised from the Minute of the first meeting of administrators of BLB’s Bequest, in the Society’s archives).

Downie (1998) reported on the first few years of the Bequest’s use: by the end of 1997, £19,200 had been spent, 13% of this on the *Glasgow Naturalist* (enhancing its production standards, especially through the inclusion of colour), 15% on equipment, especially a computer and associated kit to bring the Society’s work into the modern age, 2% on special lectures, 3% on social events, 5% on administration of the bequest and 62% on “projects”. In terms of money spent, projects were 53% in the UK and 37% abroad, mostly undergraduate expeditions organised through the University of Glasgow’s Exploration Society. Downie (1998) hoped that BLB would have approved, given her personal “history of adventurous botanising in far countries”. Possibly less to BLB’s taste, projects were 61% zoological, 38% botanical and 1% miscellaneous. The aim of this paper is to analyse and report on the various contributions the BLB Bequest has made to GNHS in the 20 years since BLB’s death.

1. MANAGEMENT OF THE BEQUEST AND CRITERIA FOR FUNDING

The rules for the management of the Bequest are laid down in the Society’s Constitution. To comply with the requirements of the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator (OSCR), the Constitution was amended in November 2010. The rules are as follows (summarised from the Society’s Constitution, available on the Society’s web-site):

The Bequest is administered by an Executive comprising the Society’s President, General Secretary and Treasurer together with scientific and financial advisers (number not specified) appointed at the Society’s AGM. The aims of the Executive are to put into effect the wishes of Professor Lloyd Binns and to further the aims of the Society. The Bequest is managed in such a way as broadly to preserve its capital value, allowing for inflation, with awards made from the income accruing from investments.

It is worth noting that Dr Peter Macpherson has served as a scientific adviser to the Bequest since its inception, and that Bruce Lindsay served as financial adviser from the start of the Bequest until 2009-10.

The BLB Committee now meets three times a year (September, January and March) to coincide with

GNHS Council meetings. At these meetings, the Committee receives an update on the Bequest’s finances, considers any changes needed in the investment portfolio, makes decisions on grant applications, receives reports from work funded by the Bequest and discusses any modifications proposed to the way in which the Bequest’s income could be used.

Over the years, a number of activities have become established as being funded by the Bequest without the need for specific application. These are:

- A contribution to the social life of the Society. This funds wine at events like the September Exhibition, the Christmas Dinner, the BLB lecture and the Summer Social. It also funds the costs of pre-talk dinners for speakers. A summary of these costs is shown in Table 2. The Committee has taken the view that these contributions fit with BLB’s express wish to “arrange for refreshments.. and encourage fraternising at meetings”.
- A contribution to the costs of publication of *The Glasgow Naturalist* (see Table 2 and section 4).
- Funding of the BLB Lecture series (see section 9).

The bulk of the Bequest’s income is disbursed following applications for grants (see section 3). The Committee has made a number of modifications to the criteria for support over the years. Currently, these are (summarised from the Society’s web-site: Grant Information page):

- We assist individuals and groups in carrying out projects of natural history interest.
- Where we have to decide between the merits of competing applications, preference is given to Society members over non-members, to local over distant projects, and to projects likely to generate future publication. We will not normally give grants towards salaries.
- Limited support for postgraduate students to report their results at national and international conferences.
- Support for overseas natural history projects: this is given for two categories of project a) overseas natural history expeditions, mainly involving under-graduate expeditions; b) overseas natural history research by individuals.

In all cases, upper financial limits are advertised (and modified by the Committee from time to time). In addition, since the start of the Bequest it has been agreed that no grant greater than £2000 will be made without the approval of the Society’s Council.

2. THE BEQUEST’S FINANCES

Figure 1a shows the market value of the Bequest’s investments since 1993. As can be seen, there was a sharp rise over the first few years when applications for funding were significantly less than income generated and surpluses were re-invested, peaking at almost £316,000 in 1999.

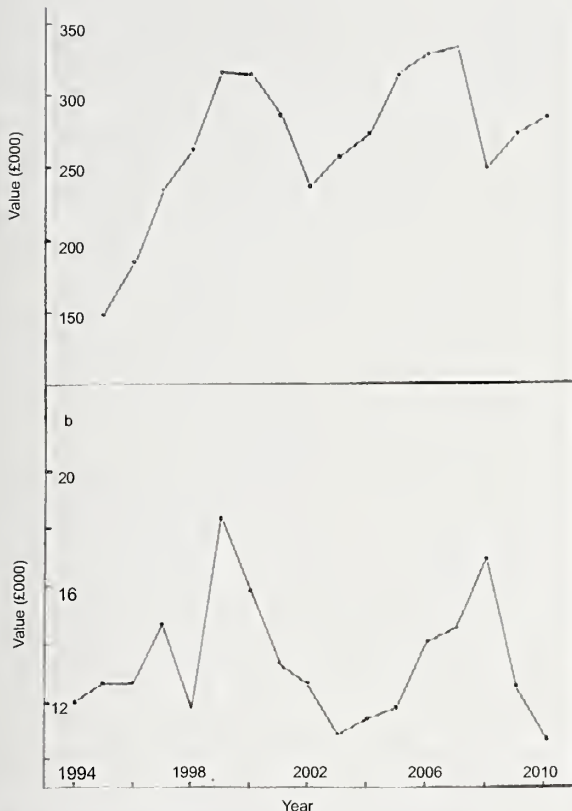


Fig. 1. Financial history of the BLB Bequest
a) Market value; b) Income

Subsequent changes in the market value of the Bequest's holdings have essentially followed the vagaries of the financial markets, especially the recent slump. Even with the recent fall in value in 2008, the Bequest is worth substantially more than at the start, even taking inflation into account. Figure 1b shows the annual income generated by the Bequest's investments. The overall policy of the Bequest Committee has been to hold a substantial proportion of the funds in 'safe' lowish interest investments, with a smaller proportion in carefully chosen stocks with potentially higher yields. Inevitably this has led to some variation in income, again generally following changes in the financial markets, but annual income has never fallen below £10,000, much in line with the original expectation and has generated a mean annual income of £13,327. The Bequest Committee was fortunate in having Bruce Lindsay's careful advice on investment policy over many years.

Table 2a shows the total income generated by the Bequest (1995-2010), total expenditure and a breakdown of the expenditure into its main categories. It is gratifying to note that overall administrative costs have been low (stockbroking, legal and general 5.5%). However, the 17-year average disguises some trends. Following a new arrangement with our stockbrokers, their fees rose substantially to 11.5% of income over the years 2007-10. The Committee regarded this as unacceptably high and a change was made during 2010.

a) Income, expenditure and main expenditure categories

	Total (£) 1994-2010
Total Income	226,559
Total Expenditure	213,559
	£ and (%)
- Grants (%)	152,386 (71.4)
- Equipment (%)	8,223 (3.9)
- Publications (%)	18,408 (8.6)
- Social (%)	8,681 (4.1)
- Meetings (%)	12,502 (5.9)
- Stockbroking – Legal (%)	9,512 (4.5)
- Administration (%)	2036 (1.0)

b) Grants categories: percentage of total grant expenditure

	(%)
Conferences, exhibitions	6.4
Habitat creation/memorial	2.3
Training courses	1.5
UG expeditions (59)	22.0
UK research	19.8
Overseas research	11.8
Collections/recording	8.6
Publications	24.3
Excursions	1.9
Donation (SCENE)	1.3

Table 2. Income generated by the BLB Bequest, and a breakdown of the main spending streams a) total income and main spending streams, b) breakdown of grant categories.

Contributions to social events and meetings average 10% of Bequest expenditure, well fulfilling BLB's request that her legacy should contribute to 'fraternisation'. A matter of concern to the Committee has been a recent steep rise in room charges imposed by our host, the University of Glasgow: without the benefit of the Bequest, the Society would certainly have had to move, in spite of the benefits of the Zoology Museum and our library being housed in the Graham Kerr Building.

Expenditure on equipment has taken up 3.8% of Bequest income. Most of this was in the early days, and was largely on computing equipment. Since 2005, the Society has had the benefit of an additional legacy (£8000, T.E. Kinsey): this is administered along with the BLB and is used wholly for the purchase of natural history equipment.

The second biggest expenditure category has been publications (8.6%). Initially, the Bequest simply made a contribution to colour printing in *The Glasgow Naturalist*. More recently, as production costs have risen and additional publications have been produced (see section 4), there has been substantial expenditure from time to time, but this is offset by income in some cases.

By far the biggest expenditure category has been grants (71.4%). An account of the variety of grants awarded is given in the next section.

3. ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY GRANTS

Table 2a gives a breakdown of the way in which the £152k on grants has been allocated. The four major items have been Publications, Undergraduate Expeditions, UK Research and Overseas Research. Over the years of the Bequest, there have been some changes in the procedures for recording expenditure, so there is a category of Publication in Table 2a as well as under grants. Most of the grant-aided publications have been for floras, especially the *Changing Flora of Glasgow* (2001), the largest single item funded by the Bequest at £8459 (as noted in section 8 and in Table 1, publications on the flora of Glasgow were among BLB's specific suggestions). The Bequest also funded a publication, jointly with Scottish Natural Heritage, on the flowers of Iona (Millar, 1993). See also section 8. The Undergraduate Expeditions (59) funded by the Bequest have all involved the University of Glasgow's Exploration Society and are discussed in section 7. Research projects both in the UK and overseas have been very varied: the Bequest has been valuable as a supplementary funder for postgraduate research projects where the consumables and travel budgets provided by the main grant have been inadequate – in this way, the Bequest has aided research on the diversity of sticklebacks in Scotland, the Gartcosh great crested newt translocation, overwintering of common frog tadpoles, local adaptations of common frogs in Scotland and wolf conservation in Ethiopia.

Collections and bio-recording (8.6% of grants) are described in section 6 as are the training courses aimed at improving identification and recording skills (1.5%). The Bequest has helped fund attendance at conferences and also the mounting of a number of exhibitions, most notably the *Animal Architecture Company*, the Hunterian Museum's contribution to Glasgow City of Design and Architecture (1999). A small proportion (2.3%) of grant funding has gone to habitat creation projects, such as wildlife gardens in schools and Froglife's *Living Waters* programme which is creating amphibian habitats around the country.

An important activity for the Society is the extensive series of excursions run each year, spring to autumn. These are largely self-funding, but a small proportion of the grant money (1.9%) has helped with these, especially with transport.

4. JOURNAL AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS (INCLUDING PRIZES FOR YOUNG AUTHORS)

The BLB Bequest gives financial support for the publication of *The Glasgow Naturalist*. *The Glasgow Naturalist* was first issued around 1908-9 and is a peer reviewed journal that publishes original studies in botany, zoology and geology, with a particular focus on studies from the West of Scotland. The journal is published on a 1-2 year basis and further supplements

are produced to publish the proceedings of conferences. The Society is fortunate in receiving generous funding from the BLB Bequest to allow the continued publication of one of the best respected natural history journals in Scotland. The BLB currently contributes £1-£2k per edition for printing, materials and secretarial work.

The BLB prize is awarded for papers submitted for publication in *The Glasgow Naturalist*. The subject area is the natural history of Scotland. The intention of the prize is to encourage work by younger scientists - "younger" in the sense of new to scientific writing. Submitted work should therefore be amongst the first three papers the writer has submitted for publication. This prize was first awarded in 2008 and prizes have been made to:

Jill M. Williams, 2008. Flood meadow vegetation at Little Leny Meadows, Callander: comparison of two adjacent grazed and ungrazed meadows. *The Glasgow Naturalist* 25(1): 51-56.

Andrew Kyle, 2009. A comparison of grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) densities between an urban park and semi-rural woodland in Glasgow. *The Glasgow Naturalist* 25(2): 23-26.

Lindsay J. Henderson, 2011. Pine martens, *Martes martes* as predators of nestling blue tits, *Cyanistes caeruleus*. *The Glasgow Naturalist* 25(3), 101-2.

The BLB Bequest has also supported publications written by members of the Society and made contribution to natural history publications of national interest. These include Knowler's (2010) checklist of the larger moths of Stirlingshire and surrounding areas; Dickson *et al.*'s (2000) book on the flora of Glasgow; Walker's (2003) book on useful herbs and Millar's (1993) book on the flowers of Iona; and Sutcliffe's (2010) book on interesting natural history sites of the Glasgow area.

5. CONFERENCES

Prior to the existence of the Bequest, conferences figured very rarely among the Society's activities. Since the Bequest, we have organised four (Table 3) at 2-4 year intervals. In all cases, the proceedings have been published, as sets of edited papers, in *The Glasgow Naturalist*, either as supplements or as part of a regular issue. In addition, the more recent three sets of proceedings have been published on-line. As shown in Table 3, conferences have usually been linked to an event, such as the Society's 150th anniversary, and have often involved a collaboration with other groups, such as the 2008 Machair conference, organised jointly with the RSPB and the Aculeate Conservation Group, to cap a three-year Esmée Fairbairn Foundation – funded project on the great yellow bumble-bee. Collaborations have helped to enlarge conference attendance, which has been excellent in all cases.

The Bequest's contributions have been a) to underwrite the costs of the conferences; b) to fund research

projects whose results have been presented at the meetings; and c) to support publications of the proceedings.

Month, Year	Conference Title	Duration (d)	Occasion	Publication
June, 2001	Alien species: friends or foes?	2	Society's 150 th Anniversary	GN 23 Supplement 2001
November, 2004	The natural history of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs	1	Recent opening of Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park	GN 24 Part 3 2005
December 2008	Machair conservation: successes and challenges	1	Culmination of joint project	GN 25 Supplement 2009
October, 2010	Urban biodiversity: successes and challenges	2	International Year of Biodiversity	Pending

Table 3. GNHS Conferences

Although the conferences have been budgeted to break even, it has been very helpful to have the cushion of the Bequest in case of financial problems; and membership income alone could simply not have provided the funds for full-scale publication. In these ways, the Bequest has been a vital factor in allowing the organisation of high quality conferences which have considerably raised the profile of the Society amongst kindred organisations.

6. RECORDING

Historically the Society has always seen the recording of the wildlife of the Clyde Area as a priority, and has maintained organised lists in one form or another showing where various species were to be found (Weddle, 2001). Since the late 1990s this process has been considerably enhanced by a series of grants from BLB for projects aiming to collate or transcribe existing data for the Glasgow Museums Biological Record Centre database, and in recent years, financial support for taxonomic training courses.

As mentioned in section 8, the aspect closest to Blodwen's interests is the transcribing of data from the Strathclyde Herbarium sheets; so far, the British species - approximately 1484 bryophytes, 335 lichens and 2,168 flowering plant records - have been gleaned from a total of some 11,000 sheets. The remaining specimens are exotic and transcription awaits a suitably qualified volunteer. Continuing the botanical theme, we have also transcribed some 450 records from a 'Flora of Renfrewshire' compiled by, or under the auspices of, Morris Young the first Curator of Paisley Museum (Weddle, 2008).

There are also several hundred records in the manuscript accounts of field excursions by the Andersonian Naturalists' Society; a start has been made on transcribing these.

Another major project helped by BLB funding is the transcription of records of beetles from Anderson Fergusson's catalogue held by the Hunterian Museum

some 3,050 records spanning the years 1860-1938, not all collected by Fergusson himself. This was added to by Roy and Betty Crowson (some 2,670 records spanning 1954-1998), and a further 10,000 records from that period were gleaned from Roy Crowson's field diaries, work which is still in progress, but which is expected to bring the total to around 50,000 records.

With the help of BLB funding, the Society has run two successful hoverfly identification courses in conjunction with the national Hoverfly Recording Scheme, the Hunterian Museum and Glasgow Museums. Recently, in conjunction with BRISC (Biological Recording in Scotland) the Bequest has offered bursaries towards the costs of species identification courses such as those run by the Field Studies Council.

Grants have also been given for the purchase of the 'Recorder' database software by members of the Society, and for attending training courses in its use. The software was originally installed on a personal computer which was also funded by a BLB grant; the PC is not capable of running the latest version of Recorder, but was until recently in use by volunteers at Glasgow Museums Resource Centre for entering records into spreadsheets ready for transfer to the main database: its 11 years lifetime was pretty good for these fast-changing times.

7. UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW STAFF-STUDENT EXPEDITIONS

The University of Glasgow's Exploration Society has a long history of organising staff-student expeditions, some to the UK but mainly overseas. These are science-based expeditions and have included projects in medicine and veterinary medicine, geology, geography and anthropology, but most have been on wildlife and conservation. The Exploration Society fell into inactivity during the period 1975-87, but was then resurrected, with the first expeditions of the re-constituted Society occurring in 1989. Raising money for Expeditions involves a great deal of fund-raising activities as well as grant applications. No single grant

is likely to fund a complete expedition, so it was very helpful when the BLB Bequest agreed that overseas expeditions would be a suitable activity to support. The first expeditions part-funded by the BLB Bequest were in 1995, and overall 59 expeditions have been supported (3.7 per year). After some debate, the Bequest Committee set a maximum of £1000 to be awarded to an expedition as a whole, not to individual participants. Awards were initially much less than that, but over the years, supported expeditions have received an average of £568.60.

Each expedition is expected to provide the Society with a report, and these are kept in the Society's Library. An on-line archive of expedition reports is in progress, and will have a link to the Society's website. For a time (2001-4) expeditions also produced a short summary for inclusion in *The Glasgow Naturalist* but this fits poorly with the expectation that *Naturalist* articles should concern mainly Scottish subjects. Another way in which expeditions have provided feedback to the Society has been via talks in the winter programme. As well as formal reports, expeditions have contributed to several Ph.D. theses, MRes and undergraduate final year project dissertations, and a substantial number of papers in refereed journals. The Society can be proud of its contributions to this work, and also to helping students gain unforgettable experiences of natural history research abroad.

8. BLB'S REQUESTS

Over the years, the suggestions made by BLB (see Introduction and Table 1) have been acted on by the Bequest Committee as thoroughly as possible.

Projects in conjunction with the Botanical Society of the British Isles (BSBI): As noted earlier, BLB funding made possible the publication of *The Changing Flora of Glasgow* (Dickson *et al.*, 2000). In addition, GNHS and BSBI contributed to the publication a checklist on the flowering plants of Argyll (Rothero & Thompson, 1994) and a flora of Tiree, Gunna and Coll (Pearman & Preston, 2000). Both are committed to supporting publication of a flora of Renfrewshire, and a flora of Lanarkshire will soon be under consideration. GNHS and BSBI also contributed to the costs of recording in the more remote upland areas of Lanarkshire for the *New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora* (Preston, Pearman & Dines, 2002).

Scouler biography: BLB gave Peter Maepheron (PM) a copy of a letter she had sent to Professor Ewan, Tulane University, New Orleans (August, 1975) which read in part "Scouleriana is now developing interest, I see in the USA, and I am hoping that the local Andersonian Naturalists Society, whose founder president he was in 1852, may after my demise, work through my papers so that they make much of the data available to USA. I propose to dispose some modest funds to them to encourage this work". In 1994, PM uplifted from Strathclyde University (on loan) a box containing the draft that BLB had typed on the life of Scouler. Over

the next few years, the Bequest Committee discussed whether to publish a 'popular account', based on BLB's notes, in *The Glasgow Naturalist*, or whether a more detailed biography was desirable. After some preliminary work, it was appreciated that considerable research, some of it international, was needed for a full biography. On the suggestion of Geoff Hancock, Dr Charles Nelson, then at the National Botanic Garden, Dublin, and an experienced historian of natural history, was approached, and he agreed to take on the work. Charles Nelson worked assiduously on the task, including obtaining a copy of Scouler's notebooks from the United States, and by late 2010 had completed a manuscript of about 125 pages plus bibliography, taxa lists and illustrations. The Bequest Committee has decided to publish this valuable material in book form as a Society publication most likely in 2012. BLB's interest in Scouler included the planting of a specially grown specimen of Scouler's willow (*Salix scouleri*) in the arboretum of Glasgow Botanic Gardens (Fig. 2).

Scott Elliot and Henmedy biographies: These were thoroughly researched by Eric Curtis and published in *The Glasgow Naturalist* (Curtis, 2009).

Early history of the Society: This was covered by Downie (2001) and Sutcliffe (2001) in the volume of *The Glasgow Naturalist* celebrating the Society's 150th Anniversary.

The Lost Flora, Aliens and Adventives of Glasgow: These featured prominently in *The Changing Flora of Glasgow* (Dickson *et al.*, 2000). This 402 page book received generous financial support from the Bequest.

Lost Flora of Helensburgh: PM made enquiries of the previous and current BSBI recorders from Dunbartonshire, Allan McG. Stirling and Alison Rutherford. BLB had told the former that John Lee had pressed a sample of every plant in Dunbartonshire and put them in matching folders. Allan had examined the herbaria of Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery, the University of Glasgow, and Strathclyde University. He had found a few Lee specimens but none in matching folders. PM contacted the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, and ascertained that they held no relevant material. In the mid 1960s, Robert Mill, whilst a schoolboy at Hermitage Academy, Helensburgh, surveyed the plants growing wild in the town, and later published a flora based on this work (1967). Further work on this suggestion seems unlikely to be fruitful.

Strathclyde University Herbarium Transcripts: Although this item was on BLB's list, she informed PM that it was "now in production, of interest to the Society" at Strathclyde University. However, as noted under Recording, this work is still in progress.

Strathclyde University Herbarium Catalogue: The main contributors to the herbarium were Henmedy, Scouler and Scott Elliot. Computerised cataloguing of Phanerogams was completed by Keith Watson and of

Cryptogams by J.A. McMullen (Macpherson & Watson, 1996). Computerisation of the Lichens was undertaken by Keith Watson in 2007.

Social aspects of the Society: This has been fully achieved. BLB funding has helped enhance excursions, conferences and other events, especially through provision of refreshments.

Home for the Society: Since the Bequest began, the Society has consolidated all operations into the University of Glasgow's Graham Kerr Building. The Bequest funded the provision of locked cabinets for the Society's Library, and has helped greatly with the rental costs of meeting in the Building.



Fig. 2. Blodwen Lloyd Binns planting a Scouler's willow (*Salix scouleri*) in the arboretum of Glasgow Botanic Gardens, 1988. The tree was received as a cutting from Vancouver Botanic Gardens in 1982. Present in the upper picture (left to right) are Jim Dickson, Bill Fletcher, Alex McCaw, Alastair Laurie, Ewen Donaldson, BLB and Derek Kane. The pictures were taken by Eric Curtis.

9. THE BLB LECTURE SERIES

Council agree in 2000 that it would be a good use of BLB Bequest money to fund an annual lecture series that would bring together members of the Society and the staff and students of the University of Glasgow's Division of Environmental and Evolutionary Biology (DEEB) whose Graham Kerr Building provides the Society's 'home'. The idea was that an endowed series

would attract prominent ecology and evolutionary biology researchers, the modern natural historians, and that we would ask them to prepare a lecture that would interest and be accessible to both professional and amateur natural historians. The staff of DEEB gave this idea a warm welcome and the first lecture was given by Tim Clutton-Brock in October 2001. A full list of the lectures (the first 11 years of the series) is given in Table 4. The series continues in collaboration with the recently created Institute of Biodiversity, Animal Health and Comparative Medicine, successor to DEEB after the 2010 University of Glasgow restructuring.

The series began literally with a bang, since it coincided with the disastrous fire that destroyed the University's Bower (Botany) Building. Because of the emergency electrical shutdown of the University's main circuit, the lecture had to be moved at very short notice to the Western Infirmary Lecture Theatre.

Over its 11 years, the series has provided an excellent overview of modern natural history, as can be seen from the lecturers and their titles, and has consistently attracted excellent audiences. As a measure of the quality of the lecturers in the series, three of the first five were Fellows of the Royal Society, and others in the series have been elected FRS since.

CONCLUSION

It will be obvious from the foregoing accounts that the BLB Bequest's impact on the Society's activities has been immense and we are exceedingly grateful to have been the recipient of this legacy. The additional annual income of £13,000 has been a huge injection of funds for a small Natural History Society whose annual subscription income is around £3,000. Subscription income covers room hire and speakers' travel expenses for the winter programme, newsletter costs and a proportion of the publication costs of *The Glasgow Naturalist*: the remainder of the Society's activities as described here are funded by the Bequest. We feel that the income has been used imaginatively and diversely in accordance with her wishes to benefit natural history knowledge and activity at home and abroad. With continued wise management of the Bequest's investments, we anticipate that it will continue to be of benefit for years to come.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Year	Lecturer	Title
2001	Prof Tim Clutton-Brock	Co-operation in mammals
2002	Prof Geoff Parker	Golden flies, sunlit meadows
2003	Prof Bill Sutherland	What is the future of agriculture and farmland birds?
2004	Dr Tracy Chapman	The complex mating systems of insects
2005	Prof Nick Davies	Cuckoos versus hosts: an evolutionary arms race
2006	Dr Mike Majerus	The peppered moth saga
2007	Prof Josephine Pemberton	When evolution and ecology meet: long-term studies on red deer and Soay sheep
2008	Prof David MacDonald	A brush with foxes and some other carnivore tales
2009	Prof Peter Slater	Learning about sound in animals
2010	Prof Roger Downie	Adventures with amphibians
2011	Prof Richard Abbott	Plant speciation in action in the UK: tales of the unexpected

Table 4. The BLB Lectures

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